AND YOU'VE GOT NO IDEA WHERE THIS CAME FROM?
NO, I'VE GOT A PRETTY DECENT IDEA.
BUY WAR BONDS
THE CUBE?
WHAT ELSE?
BUT WHY?
WHY HAS LUKIN DONE ANY OF THE THINGS HE'S DONE?
BONDS
TO MESS WITH YOUR HEAD, MOST LIKELY.
BUT THIS, IF HE REALLY DID PUT THIS HERE...IT'S LIKE HE'S TIPPING HIS HAND...
I KNOW.
STILL, IT DOES CONTINUE THE "MESSING WITH YOUR HEAD" THEME HE'S BEEN WORKIN'.
YEAH...IT DOES.
BUY WAR BONDS

THAT IT'S NOT REALLY BUCKY...
IT'S JUST WHATEVER WAS LEFT OF HIM THAT THEY COULD MANIPULATE FOR THEIR OWN ENDS.
IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER?
YEAH.
WELL, IT DOESN'T... AND YOU SHOULD READ THAT FILE CLOSER, SHARON.
HE KEPT TURNING AGAINST THEM, AND HE DISAPPEARED WHEN THEY SENT HIM TO AMERICA.
THERE'S SOME PART OF HIM, OF WHO HE IS, STILL TRAPPED INSIDE...
SOMEWHERE INSIDE THAT THING THEY TURNED HIM INTO, IS WHATEVER'S LEFT OF BUCKY BARNES' HUMANITY.
WE DON'T KNOW THAT, ROGERS...
HE WAS MY PARTNER, DAMN IT...
...HE WAS MY FRIEND...

THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT HE'S WALKING AROUND OUT THERE *RIGHT NOW*, UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE *EXACT* KIND OF PEOPLE HE SPENT HIS LIFE FIGHTING.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING...

I *KNOW* YOU'RE GOING THROUGH *HELL*, STEVE...I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE WE ALL KNOW WHAT--

I DON'T KNOW *ANYTHING* ANYMORE, SHARON.
AND I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER IF I EVER *DID*.

NICK, YEAH... NO, I *BLEW* IT. I THINK I USED TO KNOW HOW TO *TALK* TO HIM, BUT...
YEAH, YEAH...MAKE THE CALL, IF YOU CAN...

"...MAYBE HE'LL HAVE BETTER LUCK THAN I DID..."

DAMN IT.
THIS IS NO WAY TO FUNCTION... WORK THROUGH IT, STEVE.
ANGER WILL NOT HELP YOU DEAL WITH THIS.
IT'LL JUST MAKE SURE THAT *WHATEVER* YOU DO NEXT IS THE WRONG MOVE.
AND YOU CAN'T AFFORD THAT.
YOU'VE LET LUKIN PUSH ALL YOUR BUTTONS TOO EASILY SO FAR... YOU CAN'T AFFORD ANYTHING BUT A CLEAR HEAD FROM THIS POINT ON...
HE'S COUNTING ON YOU...WHETHER HE *KNOWS IT* OR NOT.
BUCKY IS COUNTING ON YOU.

Arnhem, The Netherlands
September 1944

IT'S NO GOOD, CAP! WE CAN'T HOLD IT!
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
OUR INTEL SAYS THE RED SKULL IS ENCAMPED *SOMEWHERE* ALONG THE RHINE, SO...

...WE'RE GONNA HELP THE BRITISH TAKE THAT *BRIDGE*, BUCK... ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

LOOK AT THEM, THEY'VE LOST TOO MANY MEN, CAP...
THEY AREN'T GONNA BE ABLE TO DO THIS...
I KNOW... DAMN IT...

HEY... WHAT IN THE HELL?

HEY... WHAT IN THE HELL?
THEY'RE SENDING BACK SOME PRISONERS...THAT DOESN'T...
CLIVE...? IS THAT YOU?
HOLD FIRE, MATES... THEY'RE OUR BOYS.
AW GOD...
NOOO!

WHAT...?
NO. IT WASN'T HIM. THAT WAS NOT HIS FAULT. NONE OF IT IS.
DON'T FORGET THAT.
FAP!
HE'S NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ACTIONS...NOT IN CONTROL.
HE'S NOT IN CONTROL...
...AND HE'D HATE THAT MORE THAN ANYTHING.

NO! STAY BACK!
GET AWAY FROM THEM!
WOT'RE THEY ON ABOUT--

GET DOWN!
KRAK KRAK

...UKK--
KLIK

AW, CAP... THOSE SICK NAZI SONS OF--
I KNOW.
...CLIVE... M'MATE...

WHAT'S HE SAYING?
...WOT 'APPENED T' CLIVE...? WUZ ME BEST... BEST...

WE'VE GOT TO MOVE, BUCKY... NOW.
DAMN IT. THIS IS JUST-- FREAKIN' KRAUTS CUT UP THEIR BRAINS, STEVE...

THIS IS...IT'S-- IT'S SICK.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

All right, welcome back to CAP, and I hope that last page is a real crowd-pleaser. Come back next issue for more from our old friend. Lots of mail coming in these days, it seems like you guys are finally getting off the stick, thank God...So let's just go right into the letters.

I'm new here, but I need to say congratulations to Ed, Steve and the other guys. Ed Brubaker delivers the goods with a splendid espionage/action plot and skilled artist Steve Epting perfectly executes every action sequence and more. Just look at the gorgeous art in every page! This creative team is just awesome!

CAPTAIN AMERICA is the coolest comic out there and deserves a wider audience. I'm not a big fan of super hero stuff, but I got totally caught up after the "Out of the Time" arc and the introduction of the Winter Soldier character. Ed, I have some questions for you:

1) Any plans to do one Winter Soldier's "lost years" mini?

2) Any plans to bring HYDRA and/or Black Widow to CAPTAIN AMERICA's pages?

3) Can you tell us a little bit about what you have for the Captain in the new arc coming?

Rogério
Brazil

1) It's certainly a possibility, but probably a ways down the road.
2) HYDRA, at some point, yes. Black Widow, maybe, depending on the storylines. There's a good link to her with both the Winter Soldier and S.H.I.E.L.D. So it may happen.
3) No. I wish I could, but that would be "spoilers" and those are verboten!

And these next two are finally some coherent negative letters about the Bucky/Winter Soldier connection:

I was surprised to learn that you hadn't received many letters complaining about your rumored plans for Bucky and since you've expressed disappointment with that, I figured it was my duty to weigh in on Bucky's behalf. Imagine my frustration to learn recently that Bucky might turn out to have been a serial murderer in the employ of the enemies of America for decades! I say thee nay! Just when you've single-handedly recaptured Bucky's characterization (from the original template hinted at by Stan and Jack) and revealed him for the exciting, competent, and deadly efficient soldier he was, you seem to be in the process of turning on a dime and tossing it all away. If an apparently solitary voice crying in the wilderness, who's been waiting decades for Bucky to finally receive his due can have any influence, I'm offering my sincere hopes that all will turn out well for the red, white and blue sidekick and that a writer of your apparent caliber can pull off a great story with an ending that will catch readers by surprise, but without compromising Bucky's integrity or reputation!

Pierre Comtois
Lowell, Ma

I've maintained a love/hate relationship with Captain America ever since I started reading comics. I'd start buying issues, start enjoying myself, and then you'd throw something like Cap-Wolf at me. Ugh. So it was with some hesitance that I picked up the first couple of issues of the restart, and I must say I was pleased. The art is spectacular; I've always liked Epting's stuff. The color is great (kudos to D'Armata). And, what do you know, the story penned by Brubaker is engaging and entertaining. Like many people, I found the death of Jack Monroe both tragic and appropriate to the character.

But, oh $@#%, here we go. It looks like you're about to break one of THE cardinal rules of comics: no one stays dead EXCEPT Bucky and Uncle Ben. Please tell me you're not bringing Bucky back! Tell me you're not going to bring back a character that has been dead since long before my parents were a twinkle in their respective fathers' eyes. Tell me Adrian Watts is correct, and that Monroe isn't as dead as he appeared and is somehow the Winter Soldier. Heck, tell me it's the freakin' Spider Clone! Anything but Bucky! Please! The stench of someone dead this long will likely drive me away from this book.

Jason Hart
Aurora, Co

Well, this story isn't over yet, guys, and as I've said before, I see this story working on the same level as many of Stan Lee's early Cap stories where he dangled the "Bucky's not really dead" idea, except I'd like to think we're taking it to the next level. Also, I have to wonder if reading issue 11 last month made you loosen up about the unwritten rules at all? Write in and let us know.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: What's your favorite TV show, including cable TV?

Ed Brubaker: Just about anything on HBO. *The Wire*, *Deadwood*, and now *Rome*, have all kicked serious butt, some of the finest television writing and acting I've ever seen.

Steve Epting: *The Andy Griffith Show*. No explanation needed.

Michael Lark: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Homicide: Life on the Street*.

Mike Perkins: I try to avoid a lot of TV (the abundance of adverts annoys my BBC self) but I beg, steal or borrow DVD sets and recently got into *Lost*. Now, with the second season showing, it's a case of "I'll put up with the adverts just give me my *Lost* fix!"

Frank D'Armata: *nip/tuck*. I just love the edgy topic, the subplots and the truly twisted nature and depravity of everyone on it.

Aubrey Sitterson: The two greatest action cartoons of all time: *Dragonball Z* and *Samurai Jack*.

Molly Lazer: *House*, *Law and Order: SVU*, *Lost*, and *Desperate Housewives* are my must-watch shows, and I also watch a good amount of bad reality programming.

Andy Schmidt: Right now, it's *Desperate Housewives*. Alix (my wife) makes me watch *Grey's Anatomy* and I like that one too--but don't tell her. In the past, favorite TV shows for me were *Quantum Leap*, *Babylon 5* and *Farscape*.

Tom Brevoort: Now that *Gundam Seed Destiny* and the new *Doctor Who* have both ended, I don't really have any appointment television at the moment. Of all time: hard to top the *Dick Van Dyke Show*.

It pretty much goes without saying that it's a good time to be a Cap fan right now, what with this astoundingly good series showing up like a treat in the comics shop every month. But what this time is, even more so, is an AWESOME time to be a Bucky fan. Tracing the different sorts of storylines that Captain America has been used in through various decades can offer a great insight into the moods of generations and, on a smaller scale, of the comics industry at the time. But looking at the way different writers and different eras have employed the character of Bucky has been, for me, the best part of being a Captain America fan. He may be a character who gets to be the butt of jokes, but many talented creators have done interesting things with him over the years; a tradition this series has not only continued but has upped the ante for immeasurably.

Mary Borsellino,
Melbourne, Australia

Well, thank you, Mary. I've always been a big Bucky fan, too, as you can obviously tell from this run so far. It's been a lot of fun to show what a seriously dangerous guy he'd have to have been to fight side by side with Cap and the Invaders.

Awesome job on CAP #10. This was by far the best of the extended House of M storylines. I've read every one of them, and this was one I can say truly fit within the House of M story, adding depth to it without detracting from Bendis' centerpiece story.

You've brought in classic Cap villains, and now classic Cap sidekicks (maybe--guess we find that out in issue #11). Have you thought of bringing in non-Cap villains for a tumble? I never really see a classic Spider-Man villain take on somebody besides Spidey. Or a classic Iron Man villain. It would be so strange that it would almost deserve a WHAT IF? title (e.g., What If Captain America Fought the Mandarin?).

Actually, that leads to some questions: 1--How far out do you know the story? 2--Do you have a general place you want to reach a year from now and weave the story to get Cap there, or is it one storyline at a time? 3--Does your script change depending on the artist, to take advantage of their respective strengths, or do you write it the same no matter who's doing the art?

Maj. Matt Yocum, USAF
Washington, DC

I've thought about using different villains, certainly, but for the time being, I'm having too much fun with guys like Crossbones and AIM, with a few other surprises waiting in the wings. And to answer your questions:
1) I've got the book roughly planned to about issue #30 right now, with plenty more ideas to go on from there.
2) I've actually started thinking more in terms of the overall direction, the meta-arc as it were, instead of separate arcs lately, so it's more like knowing where it's going and weaving all the plot-threads together to get there.
3) When I wrote issue #9, I thought Steve Epting was going to draw it, but when Steve was unable to, and Michael Lark stepped in, I just tweaked it a little to suit him, because I've worked with Michael for years, so I know his style. Generally, though, I write the story I want, and try to gear the descriptions to suit the artist's strengths. I'm lucky, because I get to work with guys like Steve Epting, Michael Lark, Sean Phillips, and Mike Perkins, who are dynamite at what they do.

Okay, gang, that's it for this month. One note--we here at Freedom of Speech have been having a hell of a time thinking up the Question of the Month lately, so if any readers out there have Questions you want us to answer, please send them in and we'll credit you if we use your Q.

Seeya next time,
Ed Brubaker

NEXT ISSUE:

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